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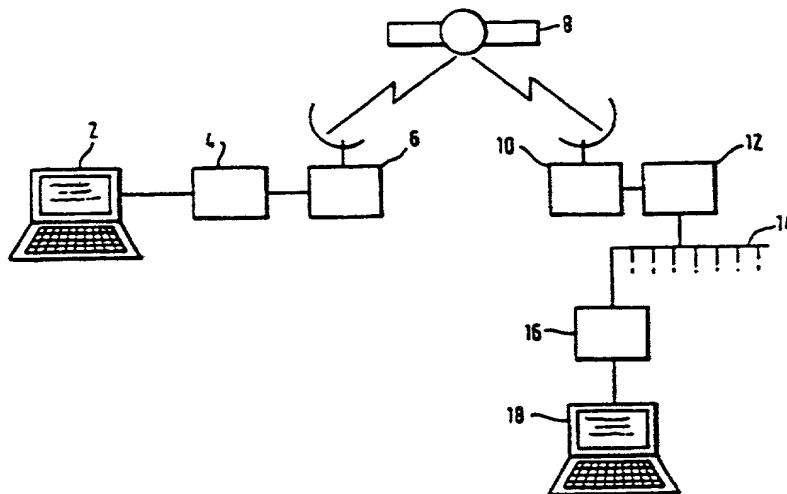
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(54) Title: DATA COMMUNICATION METHOD AND APPARATUS



(57) Abstract

An interface (4; 12) between a data terminal (2; 18) and a digital communications link (6, 8, 10) implements protocols and frame formats designed to reduce delays in a data communication with a remote terminal (18; 2). The interface (4; 12) overcomes the need to send or receive an HDLC SABME or UA control signal, and allows data to be sent over the digital communications link (6, 8, 10) as soon as the communication parameters are established. In a non-ARQ (error correction) mode, the interface (4; 12) sends control signals and data over the communications link (6, 8, 10) in frames subdivided into many small subframes of fixed length, each subframe having a length code. The interface (12), when arranged for connection to the data terminal (18) through a telephone network (14), encodes call progress signals from the telephone network (14) for sending over the digital communications link (6, 8, 10). The interface (4; 12) encodes and decodes interrupt signals for sending between the data terminal (2; 18) and the digital communications link (6, 8, 10) when an interrupt signal is detected.